

## Changes to Colorado's College Admissions Standards Policy Proposed by the Admission and Transfer Policy Review Task Force

### *Summary of key recommendations:*

**1. REMOVE THE ADMISSIONS INDEX SCORE.** The index, a combination of a student's high school performance and college entrance exam scores, is used to determine whether a student qualifies for a particular college or university. The index currently uses cumulative grade point averages and combined test scores. Test scores and grade point averages receive equal weight under the current policy.

**Why change?** The index, created in 1987, would be replaced by a more flexible review of a student's academic background and performance, including the rigor of his or her coursework. The index score does not distinguish between achievement in general high school courses and performance in more advanced work such as higher levels of math or Advanced Placement classes. The recommendation is to incorporate a system to more accurately evaluate student achievement and preparation.

**2. EMPHASIZE DEMONSTRATIONS OF COMPETENCY.** Colorado has relied upon completion of Higher Education Admissions Requirements, also known as HEAR, to determine whether students are eligible for admission to the state's four-year colleges and universities. Examples of these "seat-time" requirements include four years of language arts, four years of math and three years of science.

**Why change?** This recommendation encourages colleges and universities to be more flexible in considering other means of demonstrating readiness beyond the completion of a particular set of courses by title or time. HEAR requirements could still be used but institutions would also be encouraged to consider other demonstrations of competency, such as completing college classes while in high school, subject-specific test scores or performance in particular courses such as Advanced Placement.

**3. GUARANTEE ADMISSION FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES.** Students who successfully complete a two-year associate's degree at an accredited in-state institution would be guaranteed admission to a four-year Colorado college or university. Students would have to meet the receiving institution's minimum grade point average and have completed all community college courses with a grade of C- or better. Admission would not guarantee placement in a specific degree program.

**Why change?** This is one of several recommended changes dealing with transfer students. An analysis of data has shown students who transfer after receiving an associate's degree are more likely to graduate from four-year institutions than those who transfer with fewer credits earned.

**4. INCORPORATE NEW ASSESSMENTS WHEN AVAILABLE.** New tests now being developed to replace Colorado's annual CSAP/TCAP exams will be used as one measure of college readiness when available. Colorado will begin administering the tests in 2014-15.